

NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



DEWEY AND CUSTER COUNTIES HAVE NEW VSO'S

Dewey and Custer Counties have named new county veterans service officers.

Jerry Keller has been named Dewey County VSO. Jerry was born, raised, and spent his life in the Timber Lake area. He dedicated 22 years in the SD Army National Guard.

Jerry and his wife Colleen have one son and daughter-in-law and two granddaughters that he loves to spoil. He loves to spend time outdoors hunting and ATV riding.

Jerry is excited about his new opportunity to assist veterans. Jerry's hours in the office will be 1:00 pm—5:00 pm on Wednesdays. His email address is vso@deweycounty.biz.

Todd Fish has been named the new county VSO in Custer County.

Todd served in the U.S. Army from 1992-2020 with deployments to Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia.

Todd's hours will be 8:00—5:00 Monday-Wednesday and he can be reached at tfish@custercounty.sd.com.

Please join SDDVA in welcoming Jerry and Todd into our veteran network.



Jerry Keller

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VA TO PROVIDE COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINATIONS TO CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care facilities will begin offering COVID-19 testing and vaccinations to designated family caregivers of veterans participating in the [Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#) (PCAFC).

Each facility will determine its own start date based on site-specific resources, needs and vaccine availability.

“Caregivers play a critical role in caring for some of our most vulnerable veterans,” said VA Acting Under Secretary for Health Richard A. Stone, M.D. “One of the most important things we can

do for caregivers is to help them take care of themselves. The current pandemic has amplified the importance of our caregivers whom we recognize as valuable members of veterans’ health care teams.”

The testing and vaccines will be administered in line with [CDC allocation guidelines](#). Vaccinations will be offered in accordance with the VA’s phased risk stratification framework and will build upon elements outlined in the [COVID-19 Vaccination Plan for the Veterans Health Administration](#). Veterans and their caregivers

can get the latest information and sign up to receive updates on [VA's COVID-19 vaccine webpage](#).

For more information visit [VA’s Caregiver Support Program](#), contact your local facility’s [VA Caregiver Support Coordinator](#), or call the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274 from Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET and Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



VA PLAYS CRUCIAL ROLE IN COVID-19 TREATMENT STUDY

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) researchers and veteran volunteers from the Atlanta and San Antonio VA medical centers were part of a recently published study that yielded crucial insights into COVID-19 treatment.

The study published Dec. 11, 2020, by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, showed the drugs baricitinib and remdesivir combined were far better at improving and reducing recovery time of COVID-19 patients than treatment with remdesivir alone.

“Safe and effective vaccines for COVID-19 are being rolled out in VA and other health care settings, but finding treatments remains crucial,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA researchers and all the veterans who volunteer for studies are contributing to steady progress with regard to both vaccines and treatment options.”

The combined use of baricitinib, an anti-inflammatory drug, and remdesivir, an antiviral drug, has already influenced clinical practice. On Nov. 19, 2020, the Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization of the treatment in certain hospitalized adults and children, based mainly on the trial results.

The initial idea for the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)-sponsored trial was advanced, in part, by a research team at the Atlanta VA Medical Center (VAMC). They had been studying baricitinib prior to the pandemic as a potential agent against other infectious diseases.

Among other studies on the drug, the Atlanta VA team reviewed the medical records of 15 patients with moderate to severe COVID-19 who had received daily doses of baricitinib in addition to other treatment. The addition of the drug was associated with recovery in 11 of the patients.

The results appeared June 2020 in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. The researchers interpreted the results cautiously, since the study was based on a small number of patients and was not a randomized, placebo-controlled trial. Nonetheless, the results helped lay the groundwork for the large NIAID-sponsored study that followed.

[Click here to learn more about VA studies on COVID-19.](#)

VA APPROVES A DOZEN FISHER HOUSE SITES

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) approved 12 VA medical centers as new priority sites for future [Fisher Houses](#) to keep veterans' loved ones together during medical care.

These homes provide short-term accommodations for families and caregivers of hospitalized active-duty or retired military members and veterans who do not live within commuting distance of a hospital.

Fisher Houses help enhance VA's services and resources, providing veterans, their families, and caregivers a comforting space to reside during potentially stressful times of recovery and rehabilitation. The new priority sites will expand the VA Fisher House footprint to 76 homes. These homes sit on VA hospital campuses and are free to veterans, families, and caregivers.

Approved sites located in the U.S. include:

- Atlanta VA Health Care System
- Carl Vinson VA Medical Center
- Central Arkansas Veterans Health Care System
- Durham VA Health Care System
- Fargo VA Health Care System
- Fayetteville Coastal Health Care System
- Iowa City VA Health Care System
- Memphis VA Healthcare System
- Oklahoma City VA Health Care System
- Phoenix VA Health Care System
- VA Palo Alto Health Care System
- William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital.

In addition to 15 houses in various stages of construction planning, the Fisher House Foundation has donated and built 49 Fisher Houses for the VA and 42 for the Department of Defense (DOD). Upon completion of a Fisher House, the VA and DOD assume responsibility for their operation, maintenance, upkeep, and staffing.

In 2019 and 2020, [VA Fisher Houses](#) accommodated more than 47,401 families, saving guests more than \$32 million in lodging expenses.

Individuals may request Fisher House accommodations by contacting the Fisher House directly or their assigned VA social worker.



SD MILITARY HERITAGE ALLIANCE

The South Dakota Military Heritage Alliance has opened their new theater. This is a free-space for all to use. The theater features powered leather recliners and a state-of-the-art audio/video system that creates an experience unlike any other. The Alliance extends an invitation to come, relax, and enjoy a military-themed video.



And check out the new menu at the Patriot Grill! How about those daily specials — only \$6!

APPETIZERS

- Onion Rings- 8 oz. - \$6.99
- Chips-n-Salsa- \$4.99
- Nachos Supreme- \$8.99
- add chicken or beef- \$2.99
- Cheese Curds- \$6.99
- Artichoke Spinach Dip- \$7.99
- Poutine- \$8.99

BASKETS & 1 SIDE

- Chislic 1/2 lb- \$6.99 or 1 lb- \$9.99
- Chicken Strips (3)- \$8.49
- Wings- \$9.99 10 wings either bone-in or boneless (BBQ, Carolina Gold, Garlic Parmesan, Buffalo, Mango Habanero, Jack Daniels BBQ, or Hickory Smoked dry rub)
- Chislic/Wings Combo- \$14.99
- 1/2 lb chislic + 5 boneless + 5 bone-in wings
- Bang Bang Chicken- \$8.99
- Bang Bang Shrimp- \$10.99
- Fish & Chips- \$13.99 (2 qty 4oz cod fillets)

BURGERS/SANDWICHES & 1 SIDE

- Hamburger- \$9.99 add cheese- \$0.75 bacon- \$1
- Black-n-Blue Burger- \$12.50
- Seasoned patty, with blue cheese crumbles and bacon
- Mushroom & Swiss Burger- \$12.50
- Seasoned patty, with sautéed mushrooms and melted Swiss cheese
- South Dakota Burger- \$12.99
- Seasoned beef, deep fried w/onion rings, cheese, pickle and BBQ sauce
- Patty Melt- \$12.50
- Seasoned patty, with grilled onions on ryegrain bread topped with swiss cheese

Fire Burger- \$12.99

Seasoned 1/2 lb patty, with pepper jack cheese, jalapenos, bacon, and a spicy ranch sauce

French Dip w/Au Jus- \$12.99

Sliced seasoned patty with melted Swiss cheese w/hot au jus for dipping

Chicken Sandwich- \$8.99

add cheese- \$0.75 bacon- \$1
Grilled or crispy with lettuce, tomato, onion, and pickles

Grilled Chicken Wrap- \$8.99

Grilled chicken, bacon, lettuce, tomato, cheese, and ranch sauce.

Brisket Sandwich- \$11.99

Hickory smoked in-house sliced brisket, topped with lettuce, tomato, onion, and pickles

Smokehouse Philly- \$11.99

Sliced/smoked sirloin topped with American cheese, sautéed bell peppers, and onions

PASTA

All served with a slice of garlic toast.

Linguine w/chicken- \$11.75

Grilled chicken over linguine, sauce and vegetables

Chicken Parmesan- \$11.99

Breaded chicken breast w/marinara sauce served on top of linguine noodles

Chicken Alfredo- \$11.99

Grilled chicken breast served over linguine noodles with creamy Alfredo sauce

FROM THE GRILL & 2 SIDES

Smother your steak with our amazing garlic butter sauce, sautéed mushrooms and onions - \$2.50

Grilled Chicken Breast Dinner- \$11.99

Perfectly grilled with your choice of house, Cajun or lemon pepper seasoning

Sirloin Steak (8oz)- \$12.99

8oz steak perfectly grilled to taste

Grilled Salmon- \$14.99

Seasoned with choice of Cajun or lemon-pepper seasoning

SALADS

Dressings: Ranch, Blue Cheese, Thousand Island, French, Italian or Raspberry Vinaigrette
Add Chicken or brisket to any salad- \$1.99

Edible Salad Bowls- \$8.99

Chefs Salad- \$8.99
Topped with ham, egg, bacon, cucumber, croutons and onions

Caesar Salad- \$7.99

KIDS MENU & 1 SIDE

Apple Sauce, Corn, Green Beans, Mashed Potatoes, or Fries

Chicken Strips (2)- \$6.99

Mac-n-Cheese- \$5.99

Cheese Quesadilla- \$5.99 add chicken- \$1

Grilled Cheese Sandwich- \$4.50

DESSERTS

Please check with your server

BEVERAGES

Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Mello Yello, Sweet Tea, Iced Tea, Lemonade: White, Chocolate and Strawberry Milk

Full list of beer, wine, and cocktails

SIDES

- Fries- \$1.99
- Tater Tots- \$1.99
- Side Salad- \$1.99
- Sweet Potato Fries- \$2.25
- Mashed Potatoes- \$1.99 w/Country or Brown gravy
- Baked Potato- \$2.50; loaded add- \$2
- Green Beans- \$1.99
- Rice- \$1.99
- Baked Beans- \$1.99
- Corn- \$1.99
- Vegetable Medley- \$1.99
- Mac & Cheese- \$1.99
- Soup of the Day- \$2.99

DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS

\$6.00 Every Day

Includes 1 side

- Sun - Sloppy Joe
- Mon - Pasta w/garlic toast
- Tues - Chicken or Fish Tacos
- Wed - S.O.S.
- Thurs - Hot Beef
- Fri - Chicken Fried Steak
- Sat - Chef's Choice of Basket

OR...

Bowl of Soup
w/Chef's Choice of Sandwich



We make every attempt to identify ingredients that may cause allergic reactions. We use products such as milk, eggs, gluten, seafood, peanuts, other nuts, and sesame seeds. We can not guarantee a total absence of these products.

The Alliance offers a unique experience in a destination unlike any other in the nation. It's not just a building - it's a place where you can spend an hour or a full day - with friends, family and loved ones. *Relax, have lunch dinner, spend time at the range, enjoy a cocktail, have a business meeting, spend time with your family, have a corporate event, or enjoy the entertainment.*

SFVAHCS COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System has been busy! The Sioux City CBOC administered 188 COVID-19 vaccines to veterans this past Friday and over the weekend, the Sioux Falls VA vaccinated 492 veterans! As of this newsletter, the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System has given 2,674 first-dose vaccines and 95 second-dose vaccines!

For veteran vaccines, they are prescheduled for those who receive care at the VA and who meet current CDC/VA guidelines such as being the age of 85+ or are at high risk such as receiving chemotherapy, dialysis or have a spinal cord injury.

Please remember: to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, veterans should not come into the Sioux Falls VA or CBOCs unscheduled to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Instead, care teams will contact veterans directly to schedule an appointment based on each veteran's personal risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

As increased vaccine supply is available, the VA's goal is to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to all staff and veterans who want to be vaccinated.

If you are not enrolled at the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System, please call the Eligibility office (605-373-4196) to inquire about enrollment.



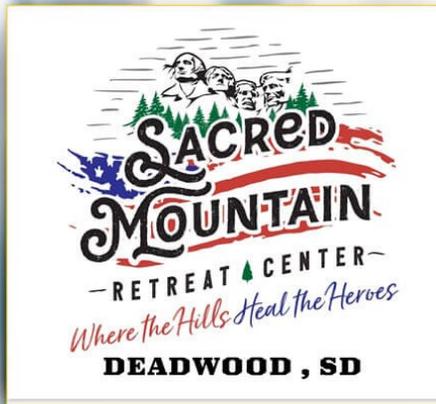
NATIONAL ACTIVITY PROFESSIONALS WEEK

This week is National Activity Professionals Week. It's a great opportunity to thank our activities director at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, Laura Inman. She is the heart and spirit of our Home.

Laura does an outstanding job of evaluating and meeting the needs of our heroes. During the pandemic, she adapted activities to continue to offer unique and personalized opportunities for them.

Please join us in thanking Laura, for all she does for our heroes and their families!





**THE LODGE AT DEADWOOD
100 PINE CREST DRIVE
DEADWOOD SD**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2021
COCKTAILS 5 - 6 PM
DINNER 6 - 7 PM
Auction and Program to Follow**

3rd Annual WINTER GALA



Keynote Speaker
Captain (R) Charlie Plumb
USNR
P.O.W. Hanoi Hilton



SSGT (R) Don Jenkins
Medal of Honor Recipient



SPC (R) Michael Fitzmaurice
Medal of Honor Recipient



PO1 (R) Sara Faulkner
Coast Guard Rescue Swimmer



SMSGT (R) James Tipton
US Air Force EOD



Dr. Jeffrey McGill
Chairman/ Co-Founder Blue H.E.L.P

Benefitting
Active Military - Veterans - LEO
First Responders - Gold Star Families

**TICKETS
ON SALE NOW**

SacredMtnRetreat.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION JERRID.SACREDMTN@GMAIL.COM

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 15—State Offices will be closed

June 24-27—American Legion State Convention—Huron

Aug 16-19—SDDVA Annual Benefits School—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre



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